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ABSTRACT

The national divorce rate has risen since the Civil War from less than two per 1,000 to one of every two married in 1976, with a continuing increase likely. Implications for divorced people suggest an increase in mental and physical illness concurrent with increase in stress. The impact appears to diminish with time. Divorce is a legal, emotional and financial process calling for many adjustments, particularly for a mother of young children who must go to work. It is imperative that both parents continue a positive relationship with their children. Most earlier investigations occurred after the divorce; this study follows the legal "event" as it transpires. It finds, among other things, that each spouse considers himself more giving than the other. Regarding children, the literature concentrates mainly on the long-term effects, but several exceptions are examined. During the project's final phase, a nine-session children's group therapy program was conducted. (LS)

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"DIVORCE: ITS IMPACT ON THE FAMILY AND CHILDREN"

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"DIVORCE: ITS IMPACT ON THE FAMILY AND CHILDREN"

Divorce and its effects upon adults as well as children become perhaps the single most concerning problem facing the mental health professions. In reaction to what was then viewed as an outragiously high divorce rate during the 1850's and 1860's existing states by 1890 had enacted legislation to restrict grounds for divorce, set residency requirements to discourage divorce and arranged for the collection of divorce statistics (Carter and Glick, 1970). After the Civil War, the divorce rate was less than 2 per 1,000 married couples, before 1900 it rose to 3 per 1,000 married couples; at the outbreak of WWI, it had jumped to 5 per 1,000; and in 1948, it had leaped to 12 per 1,000 married couples (Jacobson, 1953). In 1973, the divorce rate soared to 18 per 1,000 married couples (U. S. HEW, 1973). In 1974, there were 2 divorces for every 5 marriages that took place (McCary, 1974). The latest available statistics, of course, indicate that divorce is continuing to accelerate at a far more rapid rate, such that in 1976 over 4 million people in the United States married and 2 million divorced (U. S. Public Health Services, 1976). This means that each year over 2 million adults and over 1 million children are affected by family disunion and divorce (Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1976). This continuing increase has been discussed by several investigators (Hunt, 1966; Grollman, 1969; Sprey, 1969) with special emphasis on its effects on parents and children. Sprey (1969) has discussed 3 primary reasons why the divorce rate may be on the increase. The first of these being that parents no longer believe that it is required to stay in a marriage for the sake of the children and are beginning to recognize the detrimental effects of a bad marriage on children. Second, he believes that many couples may have decided to have children in order to attempt to hold together a very shaky marriage and third, that it may now be acceptable for larger families to attain a divorce than has been true in the past. This

increase in family disunion and disintegration has created a marked void in personal support systems for those persons involved, and might affect both the children and their parents in numerable ways (Burgess and Locke, 1953; Ackermen, 1958; and Harsh and Schrickel, 1959).

In view of this phenomenon, a series of research projects were designed and implemented at the University of Oklahoma. The projects will be reviewed one by one, together with the literature review, the research design and methodology and selected results.

PROJECT I - Divorced Women

After inspecting court files for two years in two district courts in a Southern state, it was observed that about 90 percent of the children remain in the custody of the mother. What are the effects of divorce on the mother? This was one of our first research questions.

The helping professions have historically viewed divorced people as pathological and psychologically maladjusted (Bergler, 1948; Fisher, 1973; Jacobson, 1973). In studies of psychiatric inpatients (Blacker, 1958; Malzberg, 1964; Odegard, 1953; Taube, 1970a) and outpatients (Taube, 1970b; Woodruff, Guze and Clayton, 1972), the rate of divorce was found to be greater among psychiatric patients than in the general population. In all of these comparisons, divorced men have uniformly higher rates of mental illness and suicide than do divorced women. Again using both psychiatric and nonpsychiatric subjects, Carter and Glick (1970) present evidence that when compared with other marital states, divorced men and women uniformly have far higher rates of violence, accidental falls, homicide, accidental fires or explosions, pneumonia, tuberculosis and cirrhosis of the liver. Though the above cited studies give information about psychiatric populations, it is erroneous to generalize these studies to nonpsychiatric divorced populations.

Studies on maladjustment in nonpsychiatric divorced populations are scarce

though somewhat consistent. Briscoe, Smith, Robins, Marten and Gaskin (1973) did in extensive study on psychiatric illness and the divorced. Using court records of divorce decrees in St. Louis County, they obtained a cooperative sample of divorced persons and a cooperative sample from persons living on the same block as the divorced subject. Their results indicated that divorced females were significantly more likely to have a psychiatric "disease" than were the married female controls. Of the divorced females, 40% had unipolar depressions, while only 3% of the controls had the same diagnosis; 11% of the divorced women were diagnosed as antisocial personalities, whereas none of the controls were.

Loeb (1966) tested the hypothesis that people who divorce possess personality traits which may predispose them to marital disruption. Though she did not get overall significant statistical differences, she did get significantly higher Psychopathic Deviant (pd) MMPI scale for the divorced group than the married group. Barrett (1973) compared groups of divorced, marriage counseling (subjects currently in marriage counseling), and continuously marrieds (never divorced and not currently in marriage counseling), and continuously marrieds (never divorced and not currently in marriage counseling) using the MMPI. He found higher significant differences between the groups with the divorceds having the greatest number of scales above 70T, followed by the marriage counseling group and lowest was the continuously married group. The Psychopathic Deviant (Pd) scales were highest for the two maritally disrupted groups (divorceds and marriage counseling). Data on divorced subjects were collected while they were awaiting the final divorce decree.

The research of Holmes and Rahe (1967) on the health hazards of major life changes indicates that major life changes have an impact on physical and mental health. They developed and quantified a scale that measures stress and found that 80% of individuals who obtained 300 points or greater of changes in life

events developed a serious ailment of either a physical or psychological nature. Fifty-three percent of those scoring in the 150-300 range were similarly affected. Many of the changes rated are associated with the divorce process (i.e., divorce, marital separation, change of residence, etc.). In using scaled life event changes, Paykel, Myers, Dienelt, Kleinman, Lindenthal and Pepper (1969) found that increased changes are present in people complaining of depression and other psychiatric disturbances.

The time factor is a major veriable in the level of maladjustment. Goode (1956) in his pioneer study of 425 divorced urban mothers, concluded that three-fifths of the subjects appeared to show various kinds of personal disorganization during marital dissolution: difficulty in sleeping, porrer health, greater loneliness, low work efficiency, memory difficulities, increased smoking and drinking. This impact or "trauma" fell off at the time of filing for the divorce decree and continued to decrease over time. Chester (1971) collected medical data on 150 women involved in a divorce process. He found the greatest number of symptoms (i.e., crying, weight loss or gain, sleep difficulties, heavy drinking or smoking, difficulty in concentrating, etc.) reported when separation was imminent and frequency of symptoms decreased over time. McMurray (1970) analyzed the driving records of 410 persons who were either suing or being sued for divorce in King County, Washington, in 1966-67. She found that persons involved in divorce prodeeding had from 82% to 43% more accidents and from 195% to 78% more violations than average drivers. The time of greatest accident and violation involvement was the three month period immediately following the filing of a divorce petition.

In light of the research cited, there seems to be very little research on the effect of time lapse following divorce filing on psychological maladjustment. This study was concerned with this question.

Six different groups were used in this study. There were four divorced

groups with different time spans since filing for the divorce: D1, filed 0-6 months ago; D2 filed 1-1½ years ago; D3 filed 3½-4½ years ago; D4 filed 6½ years or more ago. There was also a newly married group (NM) who had legally married in the past six months and a control married (CM) group. Subjects were women recruited from church sponsored adult groups who met the following requirements: 1) had at least a high school education; 2) were at least 18 years old when married; 3) had not seen a psychiatrist or psychologist in the past year (excluding marriage counseling); 4) must have been married only once. This study also analyzed personality characteristics of the groups. The instruments used in this study were 1) Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (Hathaway and McKinley, 1978) 2) 16 Personality Factor (Cattell, 1956), and 3) Life Event's Checklist (Holmes & Rahe, 1967). The results support the concept of divorce as a process. While the D1 and NM groups had significantly higher stress, the D2 group had the most consistent maladjustment indicators. On variable Q3 (16 DF) Undisciplined vs. Controlled D2 differs significantly from all the groups as the most undisciplined, lax, and careless of social rules. On depression Scale (MMPE) higher than other groups. The D3 and the D4 groups are similar to the CM group thereby supporting the hypothesis that though there is psychological maladjustment in women who divorce, it diminishes over time and becomes no different from continuously married women.

DIVORCE AND PARENTS

As divorcing parents come to the realization of the finality of this act, they are confronted with the fact that divorce is a process and not an event. This process involves many types of separation on several levels (Bohannan, 1968). These levels include, of course, the legal divorce, the legal process by which the marriage is dissolved in the court. This level includes the filing of the legal papers, the completion of testimony as to the grounds for the divorce except in those states which now permit no-fault divorce (Bernard, 1968;

Kessler, 1957).

In addition to this legal divorce, there also must be an emotional divorce in the family unit, whereby former support systems are terminated. In addition to both the legal and emotional divorce there is also the financial divorce. This often radically altered economic condition may add considerable relief or stress to the adjustment period following the initial legal divorce (Ross and Sawhill, 1975; Hetherington, 1976; Orthner Brown and Ferguson, 1976). The economic condition of the father is for the most part upwardly mobile following the divorce; much more frequently for the mother, it is significantly downwardly mobile (Carter and Glick, 1976). Bane (1976) in an investigation of post-divorce income of single women found that their overall income diminished 16½% at the same time as those of intact families rose about 1/3 or 33 1/3%. These economic factors have been suggested as the underlying cause in many of the negative findings in adjustment studies in children (Ross, 1975); Brandwein, Brown and Fox, 1974). In a discussion of the adjustment problems that face new single parents (Parks, 1977) reported that 40% of the respondents had moved as a result of their marital separation, 32% found it necessary to begin work or to change jobs and 2% felt it necessary to go back to school to learn some specific job skill. Over half of the mothers reporting received some form of child support and half of the fathers reporting in the study paid child support. An additional 25% received or paid alimony. Forty-three percent reported having had some kind of counseling as a result of the separation; however, less than 10% felt that their divorce had been a disaster or was particularly emotionally stressfull for them and in fact 89% felt that their lives had improved considerably since the divorce. Although a wide variety of the symptoms were perceived at the time of separation, 91% of the respondents felt that their children had adjusted to the family changes and about half of the children were seeing their other parent regularly. Krantzler (1975), described a process of mourning

that must take place following thiss loss, a process of letting go, or a decathexis. This appears to be necessary both in those marriages where there was little or no destructive communication and also in those marriages that were extremely volatile and extremely unpleasant. Seagull and Seagull, (1977), described this process as mourning the relationship with the exspouse and the non-custodial parent's feelings that he or she has lost their children. This requires the reestablishment between the non-custodial parent and the children as a relationship totally separate and distinct from that which was held in the former marriage. In this transition period which may take years, the decisions that the divorcing couple make as to how they will approach their children in helping them to understand these new relationships would seem to be crucial. They suggest that it is the province of both parents, the mother and father, to explain to the children that at one time they loved each other and no longer do as result they are deciding to get a divorce. They suggest that it is vital to emphasize that the chilfren are not divorced from the non-custodial parent. Difficulty often arises when the custodial parent has to try to set aside their own feelings and need for support in order to reassure the children that the non-custodial parent's departure and that in fact that parent still loves them. Seagull and Seagull, 1977, also point out that the most beneficial attitude for helping children to readjust to the new familial situation is for both parents to agree that it is alright for the children to love both parents and to not feel forced to choose between them. For continued healthy development it is necessary that there be a continuity of both relationships and environment for the child's continued normal development (Goldstein, Freud, and Solnit, 1973). Many other factors would seem to have a continuing influence on the overall outcome and adjustment in both parents and their children. General turmoil in the family and parental fighting and communication has been discussed by several investigators as having profound and severe detrimental effects (Westman, Klein, Swift and Kramer, 1970; Anthony, 1974). Other authors

have pointed to pre-existing pathology in divorcing spouses as well as personality difficulties which tend to both lengthen the duration and severity of the adjustment process (Brun, 1964; Loeb, 1966; Loeb and Price, 1966; and Blumenthal, 1967). The expectations of significant others in the workplace, the family and the community as well as a lack of emotional support for the divorcing parent (Brandwein, et al 1974) tend to leave the divorcing parent with confusing and ofttimes unrealistic fantasies concerning how they "should" be behaving or adjusting to the divorce.

Based upon the review of the literature in the area of the effects of divorce on parents, families and children it has become clear that very little is known about divorce and its process at the time the legal event is transpiring. Previous investigations into this area have dealt for the most part in a post hoc fashion with divorce. Investigators have primarily focused their attention on the divorce adjustment process to the virtual exclusion of the divorcing process. The present investigation attempted to explore: First, what is the relationship between the divorcing spouses on four critical levels, these being the level of regard, empathy, unconditionality, and congruence between the divorcing spouses, at the thime of divorce. When critical decisions regarding both the future of the spouses and of their children are actually being made? Second, what personality characteristics may be shared by divorcing spouses that may be significantly different of those of the general population? Third, is there any interaction between personality characteristics and levels of relationship between divorcing spouses?

Following initial contact with their attorney, divorcing couples with at least one minor child were contacted by telephone and invited to participate in the study. Each subject was asked to complete the Barrett Lennard Relationship Inventory (Barrett Lennard, 1978), designed to measure the level of regard, empathic understanding, unconditionality and congruence each subject perceives

as being received from their spouse (Other toward Self) and being given by them to their spouse (Myself to the Other).

Each subject also completed the 16 Personality Factor Questionnaire (Cattell, 1956) and had a structured interview for the purpose of gathering demographic data.

Results of this study indicated that spouses in families see themselves as having more positive regard and more giving than the other spouse. When gender is considered, females see themselves as giving more than their male counterparts. On the 16 Personality Factors there is an overall higher scatter than in the normal population. Most of the profiles show concentration in the 1, 2, 3 and 8, 9, 10 sten. The Q4 factor shows a clear tendency toward the tense end of the factor.

DIVORCE AND CHILDREN

Wallerstein and Kelly (1976) reasoned that divorce is a "time limited crisis," a "disorganization a reorganization process" of the family. Parents in an emotional crisis are apt to function in less effective ways than usual. Therefore, divorce in the family might adversely effect later emotional, social and learning adjustment of children. Some children make the adjustment to divorce while others have dramatic difficulties. No one has yet disputed Landis' (1955) finding that children from broken homes adjust to life better than children remaining in unhappy unbroken homes. The strongest trend in the literature is one which describes children of divorce and broken homes as being characteristically aggressive and deliquent, as acting out, being anti-social, loving conduct disorders, and/or displaying psychopathic tendencies (Banister and Ravden, 1945; Bowlby, 1944; Felner, et al; 1975; and Gregory, 1958).

When one looks for information on the short term effects of divorce on children, the experimental data become even rarer. John McDermott (1968 and

1970), and Joan Kelly and Judith Wallerstein (1975, 1976a, 1976b, and 1977) have produced the only research which is current and deals with the adjustment of children to the divorce process near the time of divorce and in the months that follow. McDermott's works are again retrospective in nature and non-experimental in approach. Kelly and Wallerstein have made an outstanding contribution to this field by working now for 7½ years with 131 children going through their parents' divorce. They have observed these children from the time of their parents' divorce until the present and report observations in the four studies cited.

John McDermott (1968) collected data on 16 children between the ages of 3 and 5 years, around the time that the children's parents were separating or divorcing. The data on these 10 boys and 6 girls was collected by direct observation of the children and retrospectively checking their school/nursery records. McDermott found acute behavioral changes presented as management problems in ten of the sixteen children (62%). An additional three cases (19%) demonstrated a consolidation of previously noted personality traits which were considered to represent hidden problems and reactions. These findings contradicted those of Goode (1956) in which only 18% of the mothers reported significant management problems in their children around the time of final separation and divorce. McDermott's reports came from the children's teachers.

The children in this study were clustered in 4 groups: 1) unchanged (two boys and one girl) 2) sad-angry (seven boys and one girl) 3) lost-detached (one girl and one boy), and 4) pseudo-adult (three girls).

In 1970, McDermott reported another study with over 1400 children up to the age of 14. The short term effects of divorce were not the major focus of this study, however, his conclusions are significant:

> "Reactions of children in this divorce study went far beyond those to the process of loss of a family unit and parent alone. The disruption marked by the divorce experience itself as well as its management echoed in

> the child for some time. The largest group of children consisted of those whose symptoms erupted during a subclinical depressive period after the divorce experience. These symptoms could be classified as predelinquent and, because of external and internal forces, began to become a part of their character formation. In this group there was a high correlation between the child's symptoms and the description of the absent parent, suggesting an identification with a part or fantasized part of that parent as a way of dealing with the loss and the conflict surrounding it for both mother and child."

In 1970, Dr. Joan Kelly and Judith Wallerstein began a longitudinal study with 131 children in 60 families, whose parents were engaged in the process of divorce. Their subject population, in Marin County, California, was well educated, nearly all caucasian, young, non-urban and in the upper levels of socioeconomic status. The children were seen periodically from around the time of the initial parental separation through one year. Another follow-up report not yet published is underway to evaluate the adjustment of these children after more than one year of family dissolutionment. The children's ages ranged from 2½ years through adolescence, with no children between the ages of 11 and 12 included. Their findings are reported in a series of articles which deal with the reactions of the children to the divorce process by various age groupings (preschool children, 1975; early latency children, 1976a; later latency children, 1976b; and adolescents, 1974) and the impact of divorce counseling on the families and children (1977).

In fourteen children, five and six years old, Wallerstein and Kelly (1975) found hightened anxiety and agression as a result of divorce. The initial reactions of the early latency (1976a) were dominated by feelings of sadness, grief, fear, deprivation, loss and anger. While the younger children were seen as initially disorganized and immobilized by the parental separation, the later latency child (1976b) perceived the realities of their family dissolutionment and their parents turbulence with soberness and clarity.

Basically, the present author shares the opinion that divorce counseling

of children should be a time limited intervention (Kelly and Wallerstein, 1976). In view of the literature review, the following objectives seem to be important in working with children from divorced families: a) Provide some activities to cope with and reduce the intensity of such feelings as anger, depression, and anxiety, b) reduce the "cognitive confusion" surrounding the divorce and its consequences, and c) generate a variety of ways to resolve issues the child faces.

A nine session program was devised to meet these goals and was tested on a group of children. The first session was a get acquainted session. Children were asked to draw or trace an animal they would like to be and tell why. A discussion followed in which each child identified himself and told the group what animal he was and gave any additional information he cared to share. The first session concluded with a discussion about the purpose of the group. The leader described feelings and difficulties some children have when divorce occurs. Children were given the opportunity to air some of their own concerns and participated in establishing goals for the group.

In the second session, divorce bignettes were used to elicit feelings children were experiencing. Short paragraphs such as the following were taped and presented to the group:

> John avoided telling his schoolmates about his parents' divorce. It was especially hard on him because both parents continued to live in the same town and he likes both of them.

or

> Rhoda would like to go and visit her father who lives in a nearby town. But this makes her mother very angry and she threatens to move away to another country overseas.

The children were asked to react and describe how it made them feel. Then they were encouraged to think about other situations they were facing that made them happy, sad, angry or confused. The situations were recorded and then discussed in terms of feelings aroused in each of the children.

The third session was a "public interview" of three young adults coming from divorced families (Fraenkel, 1977). The children had been told by the end of the second session to prepare questions for this upcoming interview. In order to initiate discussion, the leader asked the following list of questions at the beginning of the session.

"How were you told about the divorce?"

"What changes occurred as a result of the divorce?"

"How did your schoolmates react to you when they found out that your parents were divorcing?"

Children began to ask some additional questions after the interview was in progress.

The fourth session consisted of two parts: a) the IALAC activity and b) recording a made up story about a family and the way they live and interact.

IALAC (Canifield & Wells; 1976) stands for I am lovable and capable. On a sheet of paper the leader prints IALAC and tells the student that each person is lovable and capable but that the picture of ourself is affected by how others interact with us. Then a story is told and as negative events are described, pieces of the paper are torn until just a shred of paper is left. Children then have a chance to see how their IALAC is destroyed.

The second part of this session was devoted to making up a story about a family and recording it. According to Gardner (1975) children will tend to incorporate descriptions of their situation when they are asked to tell a story. This activity was done in groups of two. The students were told that the stories would be used to make up a staged play in a future session.

The focus of the fifth session was on warm-up exercises and one psychodramatic act. Warm-up exercises that seemed to be effective included:

"Talk-back." If your_____(toothbrush, notebook, desk, bed, mirror) could talk-back to you, what would it say?

"Wind-walk." Each child is told that he is going to visit a friend in

very windy weather and he is asked to demonstrate the process.

"Team sculpture." In small groups children prepare a piece of sculpture. When the product is finished, it is presented to the other groups who are asked to guess what the subject of the sculpture is.

"Radio announcements." Students are asked to prepare a broadcast as they see themselves fifteen years from now and deliver it.

These exercises were designed to increase spontaneity in the children.

Following the exercises, a psychodramatic act was produced. The leader was the director of the production. The theme centered on a family living together. The father and mother would not talk to each other and used the children to relay messages to one another. The act was followed by a brief discussion.

The sixth session was devoted to staging two of the stories recorded in the fourth session by the children. In order to reduce anxiety, the leader proposed to serve as co-producer.

All activities up to this point were designed to allow children to explore their feelings and to release some of the tensions they were encountering. The remaining sessions dealt with developing a positive self image, and looking at alternative ways of handling some of the situations they were facing.

The seventh session began with a short audio dialogue between Alice and the Mad Hatter in Wonderland:

> Alice: Where I come from, people study what they are <u>not</u> good at in order to be able to do what they are <u>good</u> at.
>
> Mad Hatter: We only go around in circles in Wonderland; but we always end up where we started. Would you mind explaining yourself?
>
> Alice: Well, grown ups tell us to find out what we did wrong, and never do it again.
>
> Mad Hatter: That's odd! It seems to me that in order to find out about something you have to study it, you should become better at something and then never do it again? But please continue.

Alice: Nobody ever tells us to study the right things we do. We're only supposed to learn from the wrong things. But we are permitted to study the right things other people do. And sometimes we're even told to copy them.

Mad Hatter: That's cheating!

Alice: You're quite right, Mr. Hatter. I do live in a topsy-turvy world. It seems like I have to do something wrong first, in order to learn from that what not to do. And then, by not doing what I'm not supposed to do, perhaps I'll be right. But I'd rather be right the first time, wouldn't you? (Canfield & Wells, 1976.)

This dialogue was followed by several exercises designed to enhance positive self-concept.

1) In the "magic box" exercise, students drew from a brightly colored box containing slips of paper with feeling words. Then they told about a time when they had had that feeling.

2) "Success sharing" helped students focus on positive aspects of themselves.

3) On large head profiles, participants prepared a collage of words, pictures, and other materials stressing only positive things about themselves.

A full session (eight) was devoted to exploring alternative ways to deal with some of the issues that had been raised in the second session. However, instead of dealing with feelings now, the emphasis was on decision making. The process used was the one developed by Russell (1974) and described in the Decision Making Book for Children. Children could raise additional concerns not previously discussed. One child raised the question of his mother dating somebody he did not like.

In the last session, the leader summarized the whole experience and group members discussed how they might apply what they had learned to future situations. The main activity in this session was the "goalpost" (Canfield & Wells, 1976). A football field was drawn on one wall of the room where we met. Participants were asked to decide on a goal that they would like to achieve within the next month. On football shaped cards they wrote their names on the front, their goals on the back, and pinned them, names up, on the 20 yard line. Two half hour periods each week were designated as times when children could come and move their cards according to their progress, talk to the counselor, or just see how other children were progressing toward the goal line. A follow up session was set for one month later. All five participants met their goals by the end of two weeks and established new goals, which four of the five children accomplished before the month's meeting.

All the children in the group felt that they had gained from the nine session experience. According to the parents, their children approached them more frequently to discuss emotional concerns. Teachers noted a decrease in disruptive behavior and a more favorable attitude toward learning. It should be noted, however, that the number of participants in this project was small, only eight. It is therefore difficult to generalize outcomes to other populations.

CONCLUSIONS

The concentrated research conducted seems to leave more questions than to lead us in the right direction. There are however several trends that are worth noticing:

1. Parents do not know how to tell their children that they are divorcing.
2. A year through 18 months following the divorce seems to be a stressful stage for the parents.
3. Children are expressing differently their reactions to divorce, however, dealing with their feelings at that time seems to be most important.
4. Children from divorced families need problem solving skills to cope with some of their new concerns that they are feeling.

Two attitional research projects are now in progress. One is looking at school learning and anxiety effects of divorce on children ages 6 through 10 and a second project looks at remarriage and its possible effect on parents and children.

One of the major difficulties of these projects is recruiting subjects. Lawyers told their clients not to talk about a divorce with anybody as a condition for their services. Parents are concerned with the effects of a researcher working with their children and most important, children are hiding the fact that their parents are divorcing because of explanations that they will have to give. We probably do not reach a large number of parents and children that would benefit especially from a support system.

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